A

SERMON

Preached at the

FUNERAL

Of the Reverend and Excellent Divine

Dr. Thomas Manton.

1 Theſſ.

1 THESS. 4. 17. the laſt Clauſe.

---- *And ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord.*

THE Words are a Conſolation, brought by the Apoſtle from the *third Heaven*, where he was by extraordinary Priviledge rais'd, and ſaw and underſtood how great an Happineſs it is to be with Chriſt. And they are addreſt to Believers, to moderate and allay their ſorrows for the death of thoſe Saints, who by their conjunction in Blood or Friendſhip were moſt dear to them. Thus he ſpeaks in the 13*th* Verſe, *I would not have you be ignorant, Brethren, concerning them which are aſleep, that ye ſorrow not as others which have no hope.* The Heathens, that were ſtrangers to a future ſtate, and thought that after a ſhort courſe through the World, Mankind would be loſt for ever in the Dead-Sea, might with ſome pretence abandon themſelves to the extremity of their Paſſions. But Chriſtians, to *whom Life and Immortality are reveal'd by the Goſpel; who believe, that as Jeſus died and roſe again; ſo all that ſleep in Jeſus*, that *perſevere* in Faith and Holineſs to the end, *God will bring with him*, are forbid upon the moſt weighty Reaſons, to indulge their Grief in exceſs. The Union between Chriſt and Believers is inviolable; and from thence it follows, they ſhall be partakers with him in his Glory. The Soul immediately after Death *ſhall be with Chriſt.* Whiles the Body repoſes in the Grave, 'tis in his Preſence who is Life and Light, and has a vital joyful Reſt in Communion with him. And in the appointed Time the Bodies of the Saints, thoſe happy Spoils, ſhall be reſcued from the dark Priſon of the Grave, and be ſharers with their Souls in Immortal Glory.

This conſummate Happineſs of the Saints, the Apoſtle aſſures from the higheſt Authority, *the Word of the Lord*; and deſcribes his glorious Appearance, ſo as to make the ſtrongeſt Impreſſion on our Minds. *For the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of an Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of God; and the Dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt. Then we which are alive, and remain, ſhall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air; and ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord.* Then Death, the laſt Enemy, ſo fearful and feared by Men, ſhall be deſtroyed. And the Captive Prince of the World, with all the powers of Darkneſs, and all other Rebellious Sinners that obſtinately joyn'd with him, ſhall be brought in Chains before his dreadful Tribunal: and after the great Act of the Univerſal Judgment ſhall be compleated, then all the Saints ſhall make their triumphant Entry with the Captain of their Salvation, into his Kingdom, and *ſhall ever be with the Lord.*

The general Propoſition from the Words is this; *The Saints after the Reſurrection ſhall be Compleatly and Eternally happy in the Preſence of Chriſt.*

To make this ſupernatural Bleſſedneſs more eaſie and intelligible to us, the Scripture deſcribes it by ſenſible Repreſentations. For whilſt the Soul is cloath'd with Fleſh, Fancy has ſuch a Dominion, that we can conceive of nothing but by Compariſons and Images taken from material things. 'Tis therefore ſet forth by a Feaſt, and a *Kingdom*, to ſignifie the Joy and Glory of that State. But to prevent all groſs conceits; it tells us that the Bodies of the Saints ſhall be ſpiritual, not capable of Hunger and Thirſt, nor conſequently of any Refreſhment that is cauſed by the ſatisfaction of thoſe Appetites. The objects of the moſt noble ſenſes, Seeing and Hearing, the pleaſure of which is mix'd with Reaſon, and not common to the Brutes, are more frequently made uſe of to reconcile that glorious State to the proportion of our Minds. Thus ſometimes the Bleſſed are repreſented plac'd *on Thrones with Crowns on their heads*; ſometimes *cloathed in White, with Palms in their hands*; ſometimes ſinging Songs of Triumph *to Him that ſits on the Throne*, and to their Saviour. But the reality of this Bleſſedneſs infinitely exceeds all thoſe faint Metaphors. Heaven is leſſened by Compariſons from earthly things. The Apoſtle who was dignify'd with the Revelation of the Succeſſes that ſhall happen to the Church till Time ſhall be no more, tells us, *It does not appear what we ſhall be in Eternity. The things that God has prepared for thoſe that love him*, are far more above the higheſt aſcent of our thoughts, than the Marriage-Feaſt of a great Prince exceeds in ſplendour and magnificence the imagination of one that has always liv'd in an obſcure Village, and never ſaw any Ornaments of State, nor taſted Wine in his Life. We can think of thoſe things but according to the Poverty of our Underſtandings. But ſo much we know that is

able to ſweeten all the bitterneſs, and render inſipid all the ſweetneſs of this World.

This will appear by conſidering, that whatever is requiſite to conſtitute the perfect Bleſſedneſs of Man, is fully enjoy'd in the Divine Preſence.

1. An exemption from all evils, is the firſt condition of perfect Bleſſedneſs. The ſentence of wiſe *Solon* is true in another ſenſe than he intended,

------ *Dicique beatus*
Ante obitum nemo, ſupremaq; funera debet.

No Man can be named happy whilſt in this Valley of Tears. But upon the entrance into Heaven, all thoſe Evils that by their number, variety, or weight, diſquiet and oppreſs us, are at an end.

Sin, of all evils the moſt hateful, ſhall be aboliſh'd. And all Temptations that ſurround us, and endanger our Innocence, ſhall ceaſe. Here the beſt Men lament the weakneſs of the fleſh, and ſometimes the violent Aſſaults of Spiritual Enemies. St. *Paul* himſelf breaks forth into a mournful Complaint, *O wretched Man that I am! who ſhall deliver me from this body of Death?* And when haraſs'd with the buffetings of Satan, renews his moſt earneſt Addreſſes to God to be freed from them. Here our Purity is not abſolute, we muſt be always cleanſing our ſelves from the relicts of that deep defilement that cleaves to our nature. Here our Peace is preſerv'd with the Sword in our hand, by a continual Warfare againſt Satan and the World. But in Heaven no ignorance darkens the Mind, no paſſions rebel againſt the ſanctified Will, no inherent pollution remains. The Church is *without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing.* And all Temptations that *war againſt the Soul*, ſhall then ceaſe. The Tempter was caſt out of Heaven, and none of his poiſon'd Arrows can reach that Purified Company. *Glorious Liberty!* here ardently deſir'd, but fully enjoy'd by the Sons of God above.

And as Sin, ſo all the penal conſequences of it are quite taken away. The preſent Life is an incurable Diſeaſe, and ſometimes attended with that ſharp ſenſe that Death is deſir'd as a Remedy, and accepted as a Benefit. And though the Saints have reviving Cordials, yet their Joys are mixt with Sorrows, nay, cauſed by Sorrows. The Tears of Repentance are their ſweeteſt Refreſhment. Here the *living ſtones* are cut and wounded, and made fit by Sufferings for a Temple unto God in the *New Jeruſalem.* But as in the Building of *Solomon*'s Temple the Noiſe of a Hammer was not heard, for all the Parts were Fram'd before with that exact Deſign and Correſpondence, that they firmly combin'd together. They were hew'n in another place, and nothing remain'd but the putting them one upon another in the Temple; and then as Sacred, they were inviolable. So God, *the Wiſe Architect*, having prepar'd the Saints here by many cutting Afflictions, places them in the *Eternal Building*, where no Voice of Sorrow is heard. Of the innumerable Company above, is there any Eye that Weeps, any Breaſt that Sighs, any Tongue that Complains, or Appearance of Grief? The Heavenly State is called *Life*, as only worthy of that Title. There is no Infirmity of Body, no Poverty, no Diſgrace, no Treachery of Friends, no Perſecution of Enemies. *There is no more Death, nor Sorrow, nor Crying, nor ſhall there be any more Pain: for former things are paſt away.* (Rev. 21. 4.) God *will wipe away all Tears from the Eyes of his People.* Their Salvation is compleat in all degrees. Pure Joy is the Priviledge of Heaven, unmixed Sorrows the Puniſhment of Hell.

A concurrence of all poſitive Excellencies is requiſite to Bleſſedneſs. And theſe are to be conſidered with reſpect to the entire Man.

1. The Body ſhall be awak'd out of its dead Sleep, and quickned into a glorious, immortal Life. The Soul and Body are the Eſſential Parts of Man; and though the inequality be great in their operations that reſpect Holineſs, yet their concourſe is neceſſary. Good Actions are deſign'd by the Counſel and Reſolution of the Spirit, but perform'd by the Miniſtry of the Fleſh. Every Grace expreſſes it ſelf in viſible Actions by the Body. In the Sorrows of Repentance it ſupplies Tears, in Faſtings its Appetites are reſtrain'd, in Thankſgivings the Tongue breaks forth into the joyful Praiſes of God. All the Victories over ſenſible Pleaſure and Pain are obtain'd by the Soul in conjunction with the Body. Now 'tis moſt becoming the Divine Goodneſs not to deal ſo differently, that the Soul ſhould be everlaſtingly happy, and the Body loſt in forgetfulneſs; the one glorified in Heaven, the other remain in the Duſt. From their firſt ſetting out in the World to the Grave they ran the

the ſame Race, and ſhall enjoy the ſame Reward. Here the Body is the Conſort of the Soul in Obedience and Sufferings, hereafter in Fruition. When the Crown of Purity, or Palm of Martyrdom ſhall be given by the great Judge in the View of all, they ſhall both partake in the honour. Of this we have an earneſt in the Reſurrection of Chriſt in his true Body, who *is the firſt-fruits of them that ſleep*, 1 Cor. 15. *He ſhall change our vile Bodies, that they may be faſhioned like to his glorious Body, according to the working of his Power, whereby he is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf*, Phil. 3. 1. A ſubſtantial unfading Glory will ſhine in them infinitely above the periſhing Pride of this World, that is but in appearance, like the falſe Colours painted on the Feathers of a Dove by the reflection of the Light, which preſently vaniſh, when it changeth its poſture, or the Light is withdrawn. Indeed what can be more glorious than to be conform'd to the Humanity of Chriſt, the Seat of all Beauty and Perfection. This Conformity ſhall be the Work of his own Hands. And when Omnipotence interpoſes, nothing is difficult. The raiſing the Body to an unchangeable State of Glory, is as eaſie to the Divine Power, as the forming it at the firſt in the Womb. As the Sun labours no more in the Mines in the forming Gold and Silver, the moſt precious and durable Metals, than in the Production of a poor ſhort-liv'd Flower.

II. The Soul ſhall be made perfect in all its Faculties.

1. The Underſtanding ſhall clearly ſee the moſt excellent Objects. *Now we know but in part*, 1 Cor. 13. The naked Beauty of Divine Things is vail'd, and of impoſſible diſcovery. And the weakneſs of the Mind is not proportionable to their dazling brightneſs. But when that which is perfect is come, *then that which is in part ſhall be done away*. In that enlightned ſtate, the glorious manifeſtation of the Objects ſhall as much exceed the cleareſt revealing of them here, as the Sun in its full luſtre, one Beam of Light ſtrain'd through a Crevice in the Wall. And the Underſtanding ſhall be prepar'd to take a full View of them. Therefore the Apoſtle compares the ſeveral Periods of the Church, in reſpect of the degrees of Knowledge, to the ſeveral Ages of this Life. *When I was a Child, I ſpake as a Child, I underſtood as a Child, I thought as a Child: but when I became a Man, I put away Childiſh things.* In Children the Organs, either from an exceſs of moiſture, or their ſmallneſs, are indiſpoſed for the vigorous exerciſe of the Mind: ſome ſtrictures of Reaſon appear, a preſaging ſign what will be, but mixt with much Obſcurity. But when the Organs are come to their juſt proportion and temperament, the Soul diſplays its Strength and Activity.

All things of a ſupernatural Order ſhall then be clearly diſcovered. The contrivance of our Salvation, the ways of conducting us to Bleſſedneſs, which are Objects of a ſublime Nature, will afford an exquiſite Pleaſure to the Underſtanding. All the ſecrets of our Redemption ſhall be unſealed. *The great Myſtery of Godlineſs*, the Incarnation of the Eternal Son, and his according Juſtice with Mercy, ſhall then be apparent. The Divine Counſels in governing the World, are now only viſible in their wonderful Effects, either of Mercy or Juſtice, and thoſe moſt dreadful; but the Reaſons of them are paſt finding out. But what our Saviour ſaid to *Peter, What I do, thou knoweſt not now, but ſhalt know hereafter*, is applicable to theſe impenetrable Diſpenſations. All the original Fountains of Wiſdom, as clear as deep, ſhall then be opened. We ſhall then ſee the Beauty of Providence in diſpoſing Temporal Things in order to our Eternal Felicity. We now ſee as it were the rough Part, and Knots of that curious Embroidery: But then the whole Work ſhall be unfolded, the ſweetneſs of the Colours, and proportion of the Figures appear. There we ſhall be able to expound the perplexing Riddle, *How out of the Eater came Meat, and out of the Strong came Sweetneſs. For we ſhall know as we are known.*

We ſhall ſee God. Our Saviour tells us, *This is Life Eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* The beginning and perfection of our Happineſs conſiſts in this Knowledge. The Deity is ſpiritual and inviſible to the Eye of the Body, infinite and incomprehenſible to the Soul. But we ſhall then ſo clearly underſtand the *Divine Perfections*, that our preſent knowledge compar'd to that, is but as the ſeeing a dark reſemblance in a Glaſs, to the clear view of a Perſon in the Native Beauty of his Face. God is moſt glorioufly preſent in Heaven. For according to the degrees of excellence in the Work, ſuch are the Impreſſions and Diſcoveries of the Virtues of the Cauſe. Now all ſenſible things in the low order of Nature, are but weak reſultances from his Perfections, in compariſon of their illuſtrious Effects in the Divine World. The Glories of the Place, and of the Inhabitants, the Angels and Saints, clearly expreſs his Majeſty, Goodneſs and Power. But in a tranſcendent manner he exhibits himſelf in the glorified Mediator. He is ſtiled *the Bright-*

neſs of his Father's Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon; not only for his equal Perfections in reſpect of the Unity of their Nature, but to ſignifie that God in the Perſon of the incarnate Mediator is ſo fully repreſented to us, that by the ſight of him we ſee God himſelf in his unchangeable Excellencies. This appears by the following words, that *having purged us from our ſins, he ſate down on the right hand of the Majeſty on high*; for they reſpect the Son of God as united to the humane Nature, in which he perform'd the Office of the Prieſthood, and took poſſeſſion of his glorious Kingdom. During his humble ſtate, the Divine Virtues, Wiſdom, Goodneſs, Holineſs, Power, were ſo viſible in his Perſon, Life, Revelations, and miraculous Works, that when *Philip* ſo long'd for the ſight of the Father as the only conſummate Bleſſedneſs, *Shew us the Father, and it ſuffices*; He told him, *He that has ſeen me, has ſeen the Father alſo.* But how brightly do they appear in his triumphant Exaltation. 'Twas his Prayer on Earth; *Father, I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory.* Ineſtimable Felicity! Whether we conſider him in the reſpect of an Object, that incomparably tranſcends all the created Glory of Heaven, or in the relation of our Head, on a double account; partly becauſe he was debaſed into the form of a Servant, and ſuffered all Indignities and Cruelties of Sinners for us, has received the Recompence of his Meritorious Sufferings, the triumph of his Victory, *being glorified with the Father with the Glory he had before the World was*; and partly becauſe every Member ſhall be conformed to him in his Glory; *We ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* And all Felicity and Glory is compriz'd in that Promiſe. The ſight of the Face of *Moſes* when radiant, had no transforming efficacy; for the light of it was not in him as its ſource, but by derivation. But God is Light *eſſentially*, and the ſight of his Perfections will be productive of his *Likeneſs* in us, ſo far as it may be in a reſtrained Subject. When our Saviour was upon the *holy Mount*, and one vaniſhing Beam of Glory appear'd in his *Transfiguration*, *Peter* was ſo tranſported at the ſight, that he forgot the World and himſelf. How raviſhing then will the ſight of him be in his triumphant Majeſty, when we ſhall be tranſfigured our ſelves?

2. As we ſhall behold God's Face, know his moſt amiable Excellencies; ſo they ſhall love him as perfectly as they know him. To the illuſtrations of the Mind, there are correſpondent impreſſions on the Heart. In the preſent ſtate our Love is imperfect, and as Fire out of its ſphere, dies away, by our neglect to feed it with proper materials, enamouring conſiderations of God. But 'tis not ſo in Heaven: there the Divine Sun attracts every Eye with the light of its Beauty, and inflames every Heart with the heat of his Love. The continual Preſence of God is in different reſpects the Cauſe and Effect of our Love to him. For there is no more powerful Attractive to love him, than to ſee him; And Love keeps the Thoughts undivided from him. *God is Love*, and will kindle in us a pure Affection that Eternity ſhall never leſſen.

Our Affections that are now ſcattered on many things, wherein ſome ſmall Reflections of his Goodneſs appear, ſhall joyn in one full Current in Heaven, where *God is all in all.* We ſhall then underſtand the riches of his Love, that God who is infinitely happy in himſelf, ſhould make Man for ſuch a Glory, and ſuch a Glory for Man. And that when for his Rebellion he was juſtly expell'd from Paradice, and under a ſentence of Eternal Death, God ſhould pleaſe to reſtore him to his Favour, and to give him a better ſtate than was forfeited. We ſhall then underſtand our infinite Obligations to the Son of God, who deſcended from the Heaven of Heavens to our Earth; and which is more, from the Majeſty wherein he there reign'd, from the Glory wherein he was viſible to the Angelical Minds, and became Man for Men, Redemption for the Loſt, to purchaſe Immortal Life for thoſe who were dead to that bleſſed Life. In ſhort, then God will expreſs his Love to us in the higheſt degrees that a finite Creature is capable to receive from Love it ſelf, and we ſhall love him with all the ſtrength of our glorified Powers.

3. Compleat ſatisfaction flows from union with God by Knowledge and Love. *In his Preſence is fulneſs of Joy, at his Right-hand are Pleaſures for ever.* The Cauſes and Excellencies of the Heavenly Life are in thoſe words expreſt. The Cauſes are the influxive Preſence of God, the revelation of his attractive Perfections, the beholding his Face, the declaration of his peculiar Favour. This our bleſſed Lord himſelf had a reſpect to, as the compleat Reward of his Sufferings: *Thou ſhalt make me full of Joy with thy Countenance.* And his *Right-hand*, his Bounty, that diſpenſes, and Power that ſecures that Felicity. The Excellencies of this State are fulneſs of Joy, and that without diminution, or end.

When

When the Soul opens its eyes to the clear diſcoveries of the firſt Truth, and its breaſt to the dear and intimate imbraces of the Supream Good, beyond which nothing remains to be known, nothing to be enjoy'd, what a deluge of the pureſt Pleaſures will overflow it? We cannot aſcend in our thoughts ſo high, as to conceive the exceſs of Joy that attends thoſe operations of the glorified Soul upon its proper Object. But ſomething we may conjecture.

(1.) Thoſe who are poſſeſt with a noble Paſſion for Knowledge, how do they deſpiſe all lower Pleaſures in compariſon of it? How do they forget themſelves, neglect the Body, and retire into the Mind, the higheſt part of Man, and neareſt to God? The bare apprehenſion of ſuch things that by their internal Nature have no attractive influence upon the Affections, is pleaſant to the Underſtanding. As the appearance of Light, though not attended with any other viſible Beauties, refreſhes the Eye after long Darkneſs: ſo the clear diſcovery of Truths, how abſtract ſo-ever, that were before unknown, is grateful to the intellective Faculty. Thus ſome have been ſtrangely tranſported with the Pleaſures of a Mathematical Demonſtration, when the Evidence, not the Importance of the Thing was ſo raviſhing: for what is more dry and barren of Delight than the ſpeculation of Figures and Numbers? *Solon* when near his end, and ſome of his Friends that viſited him were ſpeaking ſoftly of a Point of Philoſophy, by a ſound of Wiſdom was awaken'd from the ſleep of Death that was juſt ſeizing on him, and opening his Eyes, and raiſing his Head to give attention; being ask'd the reaſon of it? Anſwered, *That when* * *I underſtand what you are diſcourſing of, I may die.* Such was his delight in Knowledge, that a little of it made his Agony inſenſible. But here are many Imperfections that leſſen this intellectual Pleaſure, which ſhall ceaſe in Heaven. Here the acquiſition of Knowledge is often with the expence of Health: the flower of the Spirits, neceſſary for Natural Operations, is waſted by intenſe thoughts. How often are the Learned ſickly? As the Flint when 'tis ſtruck, gives not a ſpark without conſuming it ſelf; So Knowledge is obtain'd by Studies that waſte our faint ſenſitive Faculties. But then our Knowledge ſhall be a free emanation from the Spring of Truth, without our labour and pains. Here we learn by circuit, and diſcern by comparing things; our Ignorance is diſpell'd by a gradual ſucceſſion of Light: But then Univerſal Knowldge ſhall be infuſed in a moment. Here after all our labour and toyl, how little Knowledge do we gain? Every Queſtion is a Labyrinth, out of which the nimbleſt and moſt ſearching Minds cannot extricate themſelves. How many ſpecious Errors impoſe upon our Underſtandings? We look on things by falſe Lights, through deceiving Spectacles: But then our Knowledge ſhall be certain and compleat. There is no forbidden Tree in the Celeſtial Paradiſe, as no inordinate Affection. But ſuppoſe that all things in the compaſs of the World were known, yet ſtill there would be emptineſs and anguiſh in the Mind: for the moſt comprehenſive Knowledge of things that are inſufficient to make us happy, cannot afford true Satisfaction. But then we ſhall ſee God in all his Excellencies, the ſupream Object and End, the only Felicity of the Soul. How will the ſight of his Glory perſonally ſhining in our Redeemer, in the firſt moment quench our extream thirſt, and fill us with Joy and Admiration? 'Tis not as the naked conception of Treaſures, that only makes rich in *Ideas*, but that Divine ſight gives a real Intereſt in him. The Angels are ſo raviſh'd with the Beauties and Wonders of his Face, that they never divert a moment from the contemplation of it.

* *Ut cum iſtud quicquid eſt de quo diſputatis percepero, moriar.* Val. Max.

2. The pure Love of the Saints to God is then fully ſatisfied. Love conſidered as an affection of Friendſhip, is always attended with two deſires; to be aſſured of Reciprocal Love, and to enjoy the Converſation of the Perſon beloved, the teſtimony of his eſteem and good-will. This kind of * Affection ſeems to be inconſiſtent with that infinite diſtance that is between God and the Creature. But though 'tis diſproportionable to the Divine Majeſty, 'tis proportionable to his Goodneſs. Accordingly our Saviour Promiſes, *He that loves me, ſhall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifeſt my ſelf unto him.* And to confirm our belief of this aſtoniſhing Condeſcention, repeats it, *If a Man love me, my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him.* In the preſent ſtate, the ſigns of God's ſpecial Faviour are exhibited to his Friends. Now he beſtows on them the Honour of being his Sons, the Graces and Comforts of his Spirit, the precious Earneſts of his Love, and *Seal of their Redemption.* But in eminency of degrees, the effects of his Love are incomparably more glorious in Heaven. Here the Saints are Adopted, there Crown'd. There he opens all the bright Treaſures of his Wiſdom, the Riches of his Goodneſs, the Beauties of his Holineſs, the Glories of his Power, and by the intimate applicati-

* *Ariſtot.*

on

on of his Preſence, makes his Love moſt ſenſible to them. O the mutual delights between God and glorified Souls! God looks on them with an engaged Eye, as his own by many dear Titles, and is well-pleaſed in his own Goodneſs to them, and raviſh'd with the reflex of his own Excellencies ſhining in them. *As the Bridegroom rejoyces over the Bride*, ('tis the Language of Divine Love) *ſo their God rejoyces over them.* And what a bleſſed Reſt do they find in the compleat fruition of their Beloved? All their deſires quietly expire in his Boſom. What Triumphs of Joy follow? Can we frame a fuller Conception of Happineſs, than to be perfectly loved by infinite Goodneſs, and perfectly to love him?

3. The ſupreme Joy of the Saints is for the Felicity and Glory of God himſelf. For as the Holy Soul feels no more powerful motive to love God, than becauſe he is moſt worthy of it, as he is God, a Being of infinite Excellencies, and therefore to be loved above the deareſt Perſons and Things, even it ſelf; ſo the higheſt Joy it partakes of is from this Conſideration, That God is infinitely bleſſed and glorious. For in this the ſupream deſire of Love is accompliſh'd, that the moſt beloved Object is perfectly honour'd and pleaſed. In Heaven the Love of the Saints to God is in its higheſt Perfection; and they ſee his Glory in the moſt perfect manner, which cauſes a tranſcendent Joy to them. And this is one reaſon why the Saints, though ſhining with unequal degrees of Glory, are equally content. For their moſt ardent Love being ſet on *God*, that he is pleas'd to glorifie himſelf by ſuch various communications of his Goodneſs, is full ſatisfaction to their deſires. Beſides, in thoſe different degrees of Glory, every one is ſo content with his own, * that there is no poſſible deſire of being but what he is.

* Sic itaque habebit donum aliud alio minus, ut hic quoque donum habeat ne velit amplius. *Aug.*

4. The full Joy of Heaven ſhall continue without diminution, or end.

Firſt, The number of Poſſeſſors cannot leſſen it. The Divine Preſence is an unwaſted Spring of Pleaſure equally full and open to all, and abundantly ſufficient to ſatisfy the immenſity of their deſires. Envy reigns in this World, becauſe earthly things are ſo imperfect in their Nature, and ſo peculiar in their Poſſeſſion, that they cannot ſuffice, nor be enjoyed by all. But in Heaven none is touch'd with that low baſe Paſſion: for God contains all that is precious and deſirable in the higheſt Degrees of Perfection, and all partake of the influence of his Univerſal Goodneſs without intercepting one another. In the Kingdom above there is no cauſe for the Elder Brother to repine at the Father's Bounty to the Younger, nor for the Younger to ſupplant the Elder, to obtain the Birth-right. The Heirs of God are all rais'd to Sovereign Glory. Every one enjoys him as entirely and fully, as if ſolely his Felicity. God is a *Good* as *indiviſible* as *infinite*, and not diminiſh'd by the moſt liberal Communications of Himſelf. We may illuſtrate this by comparing the Price of our Redemption, and the Reward. The Death of Chriſt is an univerſal Benefit to all the Saints, yet 'tis ſo applied to every Believer for his perfect Redemption, as if our Saviour in all his Agonies and Sufferings had no other in his Eye and Heart; as if all his Prayers, his Tears, his Blood were offer'd up to his Father only for that Perſon. The common reſpect of it the Apoſtle declares in thoſe admirable words, that ſignifie ſuch an exceſs of God's Love to us, *He that ſpared not his own Son, but deliver'd him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?* But to imagine that * the propriety of every Believer is thereby prejudiced, is not only falſe, but extreamly injurious to the Merit and Dignity, and to the infinite Love of Chriſt. Therefore the ſame Apoſtle tells us, *The Life which I now live in the Fleſh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God; who loved me, and gave himſelf for me:* as if he were the ſole Object of Chriſt's Love, the End and Reward of his Sufferings. And this appropriating of it to himſelf, is no prejudice to the Rights of all others. St. *John* deſcribes himſelf by that truly glorious Title, *The Diſciple whom Jeſus loved.* Could he ſpeak this of himſelf without the injury and indignation of the other Diſciples? Certainly he might. For if we conſider that incomprehenſive Love of Chriſt, expreſt to them all at his laſt Supper, after *Judas* was gone forth; *As the Father hath loved me, ſo have I loved you.* We may eaſily underſtand, that every one of them might juſtly believe that he was ſingularly beloved of Chriſt. They were all received in the Heart, though (with *John*) they did not all lean on the Breaſt of their Divine Maſter. Thus in Heaven God is the Univerſal Treaſure of all the Saints, and the peculiar Portion of every one. * As by his Eſſence he equally fills the whole World, and every part of it; and by his Providence equally regards all and every particular Creature; ſo in Heaven he diſpences the Riches of his Love to all, that they cannot deſire more, if every one of them were (if I may ſo expreſs it) the

* Et totum ſe dedit univerſis & totum ſingulis. Ac per hoc quicquid paſſione ſua Salvator præſtitit, ſicut totum ei debent univerſi, ſic ſinguli; niſi quod prope hoc plus ſinguli quam univerſi, quod totum acceperunt ſinguli quantum univerſi. *Salvian.*

* Si audiat multitudo ſilens, non inter ſe particulatim commununt ſonos, tanquam cibos: ſed omne quod ſonat & omnibus totum eſt, & ſingulis totum. *Auguſt. in Epiſt. ad Voluſian.*

the only begotten of *the only begotten himself*, the ſole Heir of all the Merits of his Son. Every Saint may with the inflamed Spouſe break forth in that Triumph of Love; *My Beloved is mine, and I am his.* Nay, the great number of the glorify'd Saints is ſo far from leſſening their Joy, that it unſpeakably encreaſes it. *The innumerable Company of Angels, and the General Aſſembly of the Church of the Firſt-born*, next to the Happineſs of enjoying God, are a chief part of Heaven. An unfeigned ardent Affection unites that pure Society. Our Love is now kindled either from a Relation in Nature, or ſome viſible Excellencies that render a Perſon worthy of our Choice and Friendſhip: But in Heaven the Reaſons are greater, and the degrees of Love incomparably more fervent. All Carnal Alliances and Reſpects ceaſe in that Supernatural State. The Apoſtle tells us, *If I have known Chriſt after the Fleſh, I know him ſo no more.* By the Reſurrection and Aſcenſion of Chriſt he was tranſported into another World, and had Communion with him as an Heavenly King, without low regards to the temporal priviledge of converſing with him on Earth. The Spiritual Relation is more near and permanent than the ſtricteſt Band of Nature. The Saints have all Relation to the ſame Heavenly Father, and to *Jeſus Chriſt* the Prince of Peace, and head of that happy Fraternity. The principal motive of Love here, is for the inherent Excellencies of a Perſon. Wiſdom, Goodneſs, Holineſs, are mighty Attractives, and produce a more worthy Affection, a more intimate Confederacy of Souls, than propinquity in Nature. *David* declares that *all his delight was in the Excellent.* But there are allays of this Noble Love here. For,

1. There are Reliques of Frailty in the beſt Men on Earth, ſome Blemiſhes that render them leſs amiable when diſcovered. Here their Graces are mixt Infirmities, and but aſcending to Glory. Accordingly our Love to them muſt be regular and ſerene; not clouded with Error, miſtaking Defects for amiable Qualities. But in Heaven the Image of God is compleat, by the Union of all the glorious Virtues requiſite to its Perfection. Every Saint there exactly agrees with the firſt *Exemplar*, is transformed according to the Primitive Beauty of Holineſs. No *ſpot or wrinkle remains*, or any ſuch thing, that may caſt the leaſt aſpect of Deformity upon them.

2. In the preſent ſtate, the leaſt part of the Saints Worth is viſible. As the Earth is fruitful in Plants and Flowers, but its Riches are in the Mines of precious Metals, the Veins of Marble hidden in its Boſom. True Grace appears in ſenſible Actions, *but its Glory is within.* The ſincerity of Aims, the purity of Affections, the impreſſes of the Spirit on the Heart, the interiour Beauties of Holineſs, are only ſeen by God. Beſides, ſuch is the Humility of eminent Saints, that the more they abound in Spiritual Treaſures, the leſs they ſhew. As the Heavenly Bodies when in neareſt Conjunction with the Sun, and fulleſt of Light, make the leaſt Appearance to our Sight. But all their Excellencies ſhall then be in view. *The Glory of God ſhall be revealed in them.* And how attractive is the Divine Likeneſs to an holy Eye? How will it raviſh the Saints to behold an immortal Lovelineſs ſhining in one another? Their Love is mutual and reflexive, proportionable to the Cauſe of it. An equal conſtant Flame is preſerv'd by pure Materials. Every one is perfectly amiable, and perfectly enamour'd with all. Now can we frame a fuller Conception of Happineſs, than ſuch a State of Love, wherein whatever is pleaſant in Friendſhip is in Perfection, and whatever is diſtaſtful by Mens Folly and Weakneſs is aboliſh'd. The Pſalmiſt breaks out in a Rapture, *Behold how good and pleaſant it is for Brethren to dwell together in Unity!* Love is the Beauty and Strength of Societies, the Pleaſure of Life. How excellent is the Joy of the Bleſſed, when the Prayer of Chriſt ſhall be accompliſh'd, that they all may be *one! As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they alſo may be one in us.* God is abſolutely One in his glorious Nature and Will, and therefore unalterably Happy: And their inviolable Union in Love, is a Ray of the Eſſential Unity between the ſacred Perſons. There are no Diviſions of Heart and Tongues, as in this *Babel*, but the moſt perfect and ſweeteſt Concord, an Eternal Agreement in Tempers and Inclinations. There are no envious Compariſons; for Love that affectively transforms one into another, cauſes the Glory of every Saint to redound to the Joy of all. Every one takes his ſhare in the Felicity of all, and adds to it. Such is the power of that Celeſtial Fire wherein they all burn, that it melts and mixes Souls in ſuch an entire Union, that by Complacence and an intimate Joy, the Bleſſedneſs of all is, as it were, proper to every one; as if every one were plac'd in the Hearts of all, and all in the Heart of every one. If in the Church of the firſt-born Chriſtians, in the earthly *Jeruſalem*, the Band of Charity was ſo ſtrict, that 'tis ſaid, the *Multitude of Believers were of one Heart, and one Soul*; How much more intimate and inſeparable is the Union of the Saints in *Jeruſalem above*, where every one loves another as himſelf?

'Tis

'Tis recorded of *Alexander*, that entring with *Hæpheſtion* his Favourite, into the Pavilion of *Darius*'s Mother, then his Priſoner, ſhe bowed to the Favourite, as having a greater appearance of Majeſty, thinking him to be *Alexander*; but adviſed of her Error, ſhe humbly begg'd his Pardon, to whom the generous King reply'd, *You did not err, Mother, for this is alſo Alexander.* Such was their Affection, that whoever was taken of them, the other was taken in him; the leſs aſcending in the greater, without degrading the greater in the leſs. This is a Copy of the holy Love of the Bleſſed; but with the ſame difference, as between the Deſcription of a Star with a Coal, and its Beauty in its proper Aſpect. And where all is Love, all is Delight. O how do they enjoy and triumph in the Happineſs of one another? With what an unimaginable tenderneſs do they embrace? What Reciprocations of Endearments are between them? O their raviſhing Converſation, and ſweet Entercourſe! for their Preſence together in Heaven is not a ſilent Show. In the Transfiguration, *Moſes* and *Elias* talkt with Chriſt. With what excellent Diſcourſes do they entertain one another? If *David* felt ſuch inward Pleaſure from the ſence of God's Favours, that he could not reſtrain the expreſſion of it, but invites the Saints, *Come and hear, all ye that fear the Lord, and I will tell you what he has done for my Soul.* Certainly in Heaven, the Bleſſed with over-flowing Affections recount the Divine Benefits, the admirable Method, whereby the Life of Grace was begun, preſerv'd and carried on in the midſt of Temptations; the continual Succeſſion of Mercies in the time of their Hopes, and the Conſummation of all in the time of their Enjoyment. How joyfully do they concur in their Thankſgivings to God for the goodneſs of Creation, in making them reaſonable Creatures, capable to know, love and enjoy Him, when they might have been of the loweſt Order in the whole Sphere of Beings; for his compaſſionate Care and Providence over them in this World. But eſpecially for his Sovereign Mercy in electing them to be Veſſels of honour; for his powerful Grace, in reſcuing them from the cruel and ignominious bondage of Sin; for his moſt free Love, that juſtified them from all their Guilt by the Death of his only Son, and glorified them with himſelf. They are never weary in this delightful Exerciſe, but continually bleſs him for his Mercy that endures for ever. We may judge by the Saints here, when they are in a fit diſpoſition to praiſe God, what Fervours they feel in their united Praiſes of him in Heaven. The Pſalmiſt in an Extaſy calls to all the parts of the World to joyn with him; *The Lord reigns, let the Heavens rejoyce, and the Earth be glad; let the Sea roar, let the Fields be joyful, and all that dwell therein.* He deſires that Nature ſhould be elevated above it ſelf, that the dead parts be inſpir'd with Life, the inſenſible feel motions of Joy, and thoſe that want a Voice, break forth in Praiſes, to adorn the Divine Triumph. With what Life and Alacrity will the Saints in their bleſſed Communion celebrate the Object of their Love and Praiſes? The *Seraphims* about the Throne *cry'd to one another*, to expreſs their Zeal and Joy, in celebrating his Eternal Purity and Power, and the Glory of his Goodneſs. Oh the unſpeakable Pleaſure of this Concert! when every Soul is harmonious, and contributes his Part to the full Muſick of Heaven! O could we hear but ſome *Eccho* of thoſe Songs wherewith the Heaven of Heavens reſounds, ſome remains of thoſe Voices wherewith the Saints above *triumph in the Praiſes*, in the ſolemn Adoration of the King of Spirits, how would it inflame our deſires to be joyn'd with them? *Bleſſed are thoſe that are in thy Houſe, they always praiſe Thee.*

Non erraſti, Mater, nam hic Alexander *eſt.* Curt. l. 3.

2. The fulneſs of Joy in Heaven is undecaying; for the cauſes of it are always equal. And thoſe are the Beatifick Objects reveal'd, and the uninterrupted Contemplation of it.

Whilſt we are here below, the Sun of Righteouſneſs, as to our perception and ſence, has aſcenſions and declinations, acceſſes and receſſes. And our Earth is not ſo purified, but ſome Vapours ariſe that intercept his chearfull refreſhing Light. From hence there are alternate ſucceſſions of Spiritual Comforts and Sorrows, of Doubts and filial Confidence in the Saints. 'Tis a rare favour of Heaven, when an humble Believer in his whole courſe is ſo circumſpect as not to provoke God to appear diſpleaſed againſt him: When a Chriſtian (as thoſe tutelar Angels ſpoken of in the Goſpel) always beholds the Face of his Heavenly Father, and converſes with him with an holy Liberty. And what a torment the *hiding of God's face* is to a deſerted Soul, only they know who feel it. External troubles are many times attended with more Conſolations to the Spirit, than Afflictions to Senſe; but to love God with a tranſcendent Affection, and to fear he is our Enemy, no puniſhment exceeds, or is equal to it. As his Loving-kindneſs in their eſteem is better than Life, ſo his Diſpleaſure is worſe than Death. How do they wreſtle with God by Prayers and Tears,

Tears, and offer as it were, a holy Violence to the King of Heaven, to recover their first serenity of Mind, the lost Peace of Heart? How passionately do they cry out, with *Job*, in the Book of his Patience, (Job 29. 2, 3, 4.) *O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me: when his Candle shin'd upon my Head, and when by his Light I walk'd through darkness: As I was in the days of my youth, when the Secret of God was upon my Tabernacle.* And sometimes God delayes the revealing himself even to his dearest Children; not that he does not see their Necessities, and hear their Prayers, or is so hard that till their Extremities he is not moved with Compassion, but for wise and holy Reasons; Either *that they may not return to Folly*, if by any presumptuous Sin they forfeited their Peace; or if they have been careful to please him, yet he may deprive them of Spiritual Comforts for a time, to keep them humble, and that with an obedient resignation to his Sovereign Pleasure they may wait for his reviving Presence. And then Joy returns greater than before. For thus God usually renders with interest what he suspended only for trial. But the Saints above are for ever enlightned with the vital splendor and dear regards of his Countenance, always enjoy his beamy smiles. A continual effusion of Glory illustrates Heaven and all its blessed Inhabitants.

And their Contemplation of God is fixed. If the Object, though extraordinary glorious, were transient, or the Eye so weak that it could only see it but by glances, the heighth of Joy would not be perpetual. But the Mind is prepar'd with supernatural vigour, to see the brightness of God's Face, and by the most attentive Application always converses with that blessed Object, so that the Joy of Heaven is never intermitted for a moment. They always see, and love, and rejoyce, and praise him. 'Tis possible a carnal Suspition may arise in some, as if the uniform perpetual Vision of the same Glory might lose its perfect delightfulness. For those who seek for Happiness in the vanity of the Creatures, are always desirous of Change, and have their Judgments so corrupted, that while they languish with a secret desire after an unchangeable Good, yet they conceive no Good as desirable, that is not changed.

But to correct this gross Errour of Fancy, let us a little enquire into the Causes of Dissatisfaction, that make the constant fruition of the same thing here to be tedious.

1. Sensible things are of such a limited Goodness, that not any of them can supply all our present wants, so that 'tis necessary to leave one for another. And the most of them are Remedies of our diseased Appetites, and if not temperately used, are destructive Evils. Eating and Drinking are to extinguish Hunger and Thirst, but continued beyond just measure become nauseous. Besides, the Insufficiency of their Objects, the Senses themselves cannot be satisfied all at once. The Ear cannot attend to delightful Sounds, and the Eye be intent on beautiful Colours at the same time: the Satisfaction of one Sense defeats another of enjoying its proper good; therefore the same Object is not constantly pleasant, but the Heart is distemper'd from as many Causes, as there are Desires unaccompliish'd. Add further, all things under the Sun afford only a superficial Delight, and miserably deceive the Expectations raised of them: and many times there is a mixture of some evil in them, that is more offensive than the good is delightful. The Honey is attended with a Sting, so that often those things we sigh after through vehement Desire, when they are obtain'd, we sigh for grief. Now all these Causes of dissatisfaction cease in Heaven; for * God is an infinite Good, and whatever is truly desirable and precious is in him in all degrees of Perfection. And in his Presence all the Powers of the Soul are drawn out in their most pleasant exercise, and always enjoy their entire Happiness. The Fruition of him exceeds our most raised Hopes, as much as he is more glorious in Himself than in any borrowed Representations. God will be to us incomparably *above what we can ask or think.* The Compass of our thoughts, the Depth of our desires are imperfect Measures of his Perfections. And as he is a *Pure Good* in Himself, so he is prevalent over all Evil. 'Tis evident therefore, that nothing can allay the Joys of Saints when they are in God's Presence.

2. Novelty is not requisite to ingratiate every Good, and make it perfectly delightful. * God is infinitely happy, to whom no Good was ever new. 'Tis indeed the Sauce that gives a delicious taste to inferiour Things. For Men relish only what is eminent, and the good things of this World are so truly mean, that they are fain to borrow a shew of Greatness by comparison with a worse estate preceding. But an infinite Good produces always the same pure equal compleat Joy, because it arises from its intrinsick perfection, that wants no Foil to commend it. The Psalmist breaks forth, *Whom have I in Heaven but Thee?* This is no vanishing Rapture, but a constant joyful height of Affection. God the essential Happiness of the Saints, is always perfectly lovely and delightful to them.

* Vitæ nos tædium tenet, timor mortis natat omne consilium, nec implere nos ulla fœlicitas potest. Causa autem est, quod non pervenimus ad illud bonum immensum & insuperabile, ubi necesse est consistat nobis voluntas nostra, quia ultra summum non est locus. *Sen. ep.* 74.

* Εἰ ἡ φύσις ἁπλῆ ἐστι ἡ αὐτὴ πεφυκυῖα ἡδονὴν ἐστὶ. Διὸ ὁ Θεὸς ἀεὶ μίαν καὶ ἁπλῆν χαίρει ἡδονήν. Arist. Eth. lib. 7. c. 14.

3. The glorified Saints in every period of their happy State, have as lively a perception of it as in the beginning. To make this evident, we muſt conſider that the pleaſure of Novelty ſprings from a quick ſenſe of the oppoſite terms, between our condition in the want of ſome deſired Good, and after our obtaining it. Now the Mind is more intenſe on the advantage, and more ſtrongly affected at firſt. One newly freed from the torments of a ſharp Diſeaſe, feels a greater pleaſure than from a conſtant tenour of Health. Thoſe who are rais'd from a low State to eminent Dignity, are tranſported with their firſt change; but in tract of time the remembrance of their mean condition is ſo weakned and ſpent, that 'tis like the ſhadow of a Dream, and proportionably their Joy is leſſened. Honours, like Perfumes, by cuſtom are leſs ſenſible to thoſe that carry them. But the Saints above always conſider and feel the excellent difference between their ſuffering and triumphant State. They never loſe that raviſhing part of Felicity, the vivid ſence of paſt Evils. Their reflections are always as ſtrong on the Miſery from whence they were rais'd to the pitch of Happineſs, as in their firſt glorious Tranſlation. In what an Extaſy of wonder and pleaſure will they be, from the freſh memory of what they were, and the joyful ſence of what they are? *I was* (ſays the admiring Soul) *poor, blind, and naked*; but O miraculous and happy Alteration! I am full of Light, enrich'd with the Treaſures of Heaven, adorn'd with divine Glory, I was under the tyrannous power of Satan, *but he is bruiſed under my feet.* I was ſentenc'd to an everlaſting Separation from the Preſence of God, my only Life and Joy; but now am poſſeſt of my ſupream Good. O how tranſporting is the compariſon of theſe wide and contrary Extreams? How beautiful and pleaſant is the Day of Eternity, after ſuch a dark tempeſtuous Night? How does the remembrance of ſuch Evils produce a more lively feeling Fruition of ſuch Happineſs? How ſtrangely and mightily does *Salvation with Eternal Glory affect the Soul?* This gives a ſpritely accent to their everlaſting *Hallelujahs.* This preſerves an affectionate heat in their Thankſgivings to their Victorious Deliverer. And thus their Happineſs is always the ſame, and always new. Their Pleaſure is continued in its perfection.

Laſtly. The Bleſſedneſs of the Saints is without end. This makes Heaven to be it ſelf. There is no ſatiety of the preſent, no ſollicitude for the future. Were there a poſſibility, or the leaſt ſuſpicion of loſing that happy State, it would caſt an aſperſion of bitterneſs upon all their Delights: they could not enjoy one moments repoſe; but the more excellent their Happineſs is, the more ſtinging would their fear be of parting with it. *But the Inheritance reſerved in Heaven, is immortal, undefiled, and fades not away.* And the tenure of their Poſſeſſion is infinitely firm by the Divine Power, the true Support of their everlaſting Duration. *With God is the Fountain of Life.* They enjoy a better Immorality, than the Tree of Life could have preſerv'd in *Adam.* The Revolutions of the Heavens, and Ages, are under their Feet, and cannot in the leaſt alter or determine their Happineſs. After the paſſing of millions of Years, ſtill an entire Eternity remains of their enjoying God. O moſt deſirable State! where Bleſſedneſs and Eternity are inſeparably united. O joyful Harmony! when the full *Chorus* of Heaven ſhall ſing, *This God is our God for ever and ever.* This adds an infinite weight of their Glory. This redoubles their unſpeakable Joys with infinite ſweetneſs and ſecurity. They repoſe themſelves in the compleat fruition of their Happineſs. God reigns in the Saints, and they live in him for ever.

From what has been diſcourſed we ſhould,

1. Conſider the woful Folly of Men in refuſing ſuch an Happineſs, that by the admirable Favour of God is offer'd to their Choice. Can there be an Expectation, or Deſire, or Capacity in Man of enjoying an Happineſs beyond what is Infinite and Eternal? O blind and wretched World! ſo careleſs of everlaſting Felicity. Who can behold, without compaſſion and indignation, Men vainly ſeeking for Happineſs where 'tis not to be found, and after innumerable diſappointments fly to an Impoſſibility, and neglect their ſovereign and final Bleſſedneſs? Aſtoniſhing Madneſs! that God and Heaven ſhould be diſpiſed in compariſon of painted Trifles. This adds the greateſt Contumely to their Impiety. What powerful Charm obſtructs their true judging of things? What Spirit of Errour poſſeſſes them? Alas, *Eternal things are unſeen!* not of conſpicuous moment, and therefore in the carnal Ballance are eſteemed light, againſt temporal things preſent to the Senſe. *It does not appear what we ſhall be:* The Vail of the viſible Heavens covers the Sanctuary, where JESUS our High-Prieſt is entred, and ſtops the enquiring Eye.

But

But have we not assurance by the most infallible Principles of Faith, that the Son of God came down from Heaven to live with us, and dy for us, and that he rose again to confirm our Belief in his *exceeding great and precious Promises* concerning this Happiness in the future State? And do not the most evident Principles of Reason and universal Experience prove, that this World cannot afford true Happiness to us? How wretchedly do we forfeit the Prerogative of the reasonable Nature, by neglecting our last and blessed End? If the Mind be darkned, that it does not see the amiable Excellencies of God, and the Will so depraved that it does not feel their ravishing Power; Man ceases to be a Man, and becomes like the Beasts that Perish. As a blind Eye is no longer an Eye, being absolutely useless to that end for which it was made. And though in this present state Men are stupid and unconcern'd, yet hereafter their Misery will awaken them, to discover what is that Supream Good wherein their Perfection and Felicity consists. When their folly shall be exposed before God, Angels, and Saints, in what extream Confusion will they appear before that glorious and immense Theatre? Our Saviour told the unbelieving *Jews, There shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see* Abraham, *and* Isaac, *and* Jacob, *and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, and you your selves turn'd out.* They shall be tortur'd with the desire of Happiness without possible satisfaction. 'Tis most just that those who err without excuse, should repent without remedy.

2. Let us be excited seriously to apply our selves in the use of effectual means for the obtaining this Happiness. Indeed the original Cause of it, is the pure rich Mercy of God; the meritorious, is the most precious Obedience of our Saviour, by whom we obtain *plenteous Redemption.* His Abasement is the cause of our Exaltation. The wounds he received in his Body the Characters of Ignominy, and Footsteps of Death, are the Fountains of our Glory. *Eternal Life is the Gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* But the Gospel declares; *That without Holiness no Man shall see God.* An holy change of our Natures, perseverance in the Course of universal Obedience, are indispensibly requisite in order to our obtaining Heaven. *Those who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for Glory, Honour, and Immortality, shall partake of Eternal Life.* Now were there no other Reason of this Constitution, but the sovereign Will of God, it were sufficient. But the Foundation of it is laid in the nature of the Things themselves. Therefore our Saviour does not simply declare, that an unregenerate Person *shall not see the Kingdom of God*, but with the greatest emphasis *cannot*, to signify an absolute impossibility of it. Besides the Legal Bar that excludes unsanctified Persons from the beatifick vision of God, there is a moral incapacity. Suppose that Justice should allow Omnipotence to translate such a Sinner to Heaven, would the Place make him happy? Can two incongruous Natures delight in one another? The Happiness of Sense is by an impression of Pleasure from a suitable Object: The Happiness of intellectual Beings arises from an entire conformity of Dispositions. So that unless God recede from his Holiness, which is absolutely impossible, or Man be purified, and changed into his likeness, there can be no sweet Communion between them. Our Saviour assigns this Reason of the necessity of Regeneration in order to our admission into Heaven: *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit, is spirit.* According to the quality of the Principle, such is what proceeds from it. The Flesh is a corrupt Principle, and accordingly the natural Man is wholly carnal in his Propensions, Operations, and End. The Disease is turn'd into his Constitution. He is dead to the Spiritual Life, to the Actions and Enjoyments that are proper to it: Nay, there is in him a surviving Principle of Enmity to that Life: not only a mortal coldness to God, but a stiff aversion from him, a perpetual resistance and impatience of the Divine Presence, that would disturb his voluptuous Enjoyments. The Exercises of Heaven would be as the Torments of Hell to him, while in the midst of those pure Joys his inward Inclinations vehemently run into the lowest Lees of Sensuality. And therefore till this contrariety, so deep and predominant in an unholy Person, be removed, 'tis utterly impossible he should enjoy God with Satisfaction. Holiness alone prepares Men for the possession of Celestial Happiness, that is against the Corruption, and above the perfection of meer Nature.

Let us then, having such a Joy set before us, lay aside every weight, and the Sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith. Methinks the sight of worldly Men, so active and vigilant to prosecute their low Designs, should quicken us to seek with the greater diligence and alacrity the *Kingdom of Heaven, and the Righteousness thereof.* A carnal Wretch urged by the sting of a brutish Desire, with what impatience does

he purſue *the pleaſure of Sin, which is but for a ſeaſon?* An Ambitious Perſon, with what an intemperate height of Paſſion does he chaſe a Feather? A Covetous Man, how greedily does he proſecute the Advantages of the *preſent World that paſſes away*, and the Luſts thereof? Ah! how do they upbraid our indifferent Deſires, or dull Delays, and cold Endeavours, when *ſuch an high Prize* is ſet before us? Who is able to conceive the exceſs of Pleaſure the Soul feels when it firſt enters through the beautiful Gate of Paradiſe, and ſees before it that incomprehenſible Glory, and hears a Voice from Him that ſits upon the Throne, *Enter into thy Maſter's Joy*, for ever to be happy with him? The ſerious belief of this will draw forth all our active Powers in the Service of God. The feeding by lively thoughts on this ſupernatural Food, will add new vigor and luſtre to our Graces, and make our Victory eaſy over the World. If we believe indeed that our Bodies ſhall be ſpiritual, and our Souls divine in their perfections, it will make us reſolute to ſubdue the Rebel Fleſh, and reſcue the captiv'd Spirit from all Intanglements of Iniquity. *Having the promiſe of ſuch an excellent Reward, let us always abound in the Work of the Lord.*

3. The lively hope of this Bleſſedneſs is powerful to ſupport us under the greateſt Troubles can befal us in this our mortal Condition. Here we are toſt upon the alternate waves of Time, but hereafter we ſhall arrive at the Port, the bleſſed Boſom of our Saviour, and enjoy a peaceful Calm: *and ſo we ſhall ever be with the Lord.* Words of infinite ſweetneſs! This is the Song of our Proſperity, and Charm of our Adverſity: *We ſhall ever be with the Lord.* Well might the Apoſtle add immediately after, *therefore comfort one another with theſe words.*

More particularly. They are a Lenitive to moderate our Sorrows upon the departure of our deareſt Friends, who die in the Lord: for they aſcend from this Valley of Tears, to the happy Land of the Living. What Father is ſo deſerted of Reaſon, as to bear impatiently the parting with his Son, that goes over a narrow part of the Sea, to a rich and pleaſant Country, and receives the inveſtiture and peaceable poſſeſſion of a Kingdom? Nay, by how much the ſtronger his Love is, ſo much the more tranſporting is his Joy: eſpecially if he expects ſhortly to be with him, to ſee him on the Throne, in the ſtate of a King, and to partake of his Happineſs. If then it be impoſſible to Nature to be grieved at the felicity of one that is loved; according to what Principle of Nature or Faith do Believers ſo uncomfortably lament the Death of Friends, of whom they have aſſurance that after their leaving our Earth, they enter into an everlaſting Kingdom, to receive a Crown of Glory from Chriſt himſelf? Our Saviour tells the Diſciples, *If ye loved me, ye would rejoyce, becauſe I ſaid I go to my Father*, to ſit down at his Right-hand in Majeſty. A pure Affection directly terminates in the happineſs and exaltation of the Perſon that is loved. I am not ſpeaking againſt the exerciſe of tender Affections on the loſs of our dear Friends; and the penſive feeling of God's Hand in it; which is a natural and neceſſary Duty. There is a great difference between Stupidity and Patience: but violent Paſſion, or unremitting Sorrow, is moſt unbecoming the *Bleſſed Hope* aſſur'd to us in the Goſpel.

Chryſoſtom treating of this Argument, and reflecting upon the cuſtom of thoſe Times, wherein at Funeral Solemnities a train of Mourning Women attended the Corps, tearing their Hair and Face, and crying out with all the Expreſſions of deſperate Sorrow, breaks forth, *Ah Chriſtian Faith and Religion! that was triumphant over thine Enemies in ſo many Battles and Victories by the Blood and Death of the Martyrs, how art thou contradicted by the practice of theſe who profeſs thee in words? Is this not to be ſorrowful as thoſe that have no hope? Are theſe the affections, the expreſſions of one that believes the bleſſedneſs of Immortal Life? What will the Heathens ſay? How will they be induc'd to believe the Promiſes of Chriſt to his Servants of a glorious Kingdom, when thoſe who are ſo in title, behave themſelves as if they had no ſtedfaſt Faith in them?*

4. The hopes of this bleſſed State, is able to free us from the fear of Death. This laſt Enemy gives a hot Alarm to Mankind, both as it deprives them of all that is pleaſant here, and for the terrible Conſequences that attend it. To the Eye of Senſe, a dead Body is a ſpectacle of fearful Appearance. He that a little before heard, and diſcours'd, and with a chearful Air convers'd and enjoy'd the World, now is dead, and all his Senſes in him: the Eyes are dead to light, and the Ears to ſounds, the Tongue to words, the Heart to feel any affections, and the Countenance to diſcover them: nothing remains but ſilence, horrour, and corruption. Beſides, *after Death comes Judgment*, and a State of unrelenting Torments to the Wicked. But a true Believer that has been obedient to his Saviour, ſees things by another Light than that of Senſe, and has living hopes in his dying Agonies. He knows that Death to the Saints is but a ſleep: and while the Body reſts in the Grave, the Soul is as it were

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all Act, continually exerciſing its moſt noble Faculties on the beſt Objects. Does the Soul ſleep in that all-enlightned World, that ſees with open Face the infinite Beauty of God? that hears and bears a part in the Hymns of the Angels and Saints encircling his Throne? that drinks of the Rivers of Pleaſure that flow from his Preſence? that freely and joyfully converſes with all the Celeſtial Courtiers, the Princes of that Kingdom, the Favourites of God? Then it truly lives. This reconciles Death to a Chriſtian, who has nothing more in his Wiſhes than to be with Chriſt, and knows that Diſeaſes and Pains, the fore-runners of it, are but as breaking down the Walls of this earthly dark Priſon, that the Soul may take its flight to the happy Region, and for ever enjoy the Liberty of the Sons of God. And for his Body, that ſhall be re-united to the Soul in Glory. Methinks God ſpeaks to a dying Believer, as he did to *Jacob*, when he was to deſcend to *Egypt*; *Fear not to go down into the Grave, I will go down with thee, and I will bring thee up again.* The ſame Almighty Voice that gave being to the World, ſhall *awake thoſe who ſleep in the Duſt*, and reform them according to the Example of Chriſt's glorified Body. O how ſhould we long for that triumphant Day! and with moſt ardent Aſpirings pray, *Thy Kingdom come in its full power and glory!*

I Shall now come to ſpeak of the Mournful Subject, the Cauſe of my Appearing here at this time, the Deceaſed, Reverend and Excellent Divine, Dr. *Thomas Manton:* A Name worthy of precious and eternal Memory. And I ſhall conſider him, both in the quality of his Office, as he was an *Embaſſador of Chriſt*, declaring his Mind, and repreſenting his Authority, and in the holineſs of his Perſon, ſhewing forth the Graces and Virtues of his Divine Maſter.

God had furniſh'd him with a rare union of thoſe parts that are requiſite to form an excellent Miniſter of his Word. A clear Judgment, rich Fancy, ſtrong Memory, and happy Elocution met in him, and were excellently improved by his diligent Study.

The Preaching of the Word is the principle part of the Miniſter's Duty, moſt eſſential to his Calling, and moſt neceſſary to the Church. For this end chiefly, the ſeveral Orders in the Miniſterial Office were inſtituted, (*Epheſ.* 4.) and upon our Saviour's triumphant aſcent and reception into Heaven, an abundant effuſion of the Spirit in Graces and Abilities deſcended upon Men. Now in the performing this Work, he was of that conſpicuous Eminence, that none could detract from him, but from ignorance or envy.

He was endowed with extraordinary knowledge in the Scriptures, thoſe Holy Oracles from whence all Spiritual Light is derived: And in his Preaching, gave ſuch a perſpicuous account of the order and dependence of Divine Truths; and with that Felicity applied the Scriptures to confirm them, that every Subject by his management was cultivated and improved. His Diſcourſes were ſo clear and convincing, that none without offering voluntary violence to Conſcience, could reſiſt their Evidence. And from hence they were effectual not only to inſpire a ſudden Flame, and raiſe a ſhort Commotion in the Affections, but to make a laſting Change in the Life. For in the humane Soul ſuch is the compoſition of its Faculties, that till the Underſtanding be rectified in its Apprehenſions and Eſtimations, the Will is never induc'd to make an intire firm Choice of what is neceſſary for the obtaining perfect Happineſs. A ſincere perſevering Converſion is effected by weighty Reaſons, that ſink and ſettle in the Heart.

His Doctrine was uncorrupt and pure, *the Truth according to Goodneſs.* He was far from a guilty vile intention, to proſtitute that ſacred Ordinance for the acquiring any private ſecular Advantage. Neither did he entertain his Hearers with impertinent Subtilties, empty Notions, intricate Diſputes, dry and barren without productive Virtue: But as one that always had before his Eyes the great End of the Miniſtry, the Glory of God, and the Salvation of Men, his Sermons were directed to open their Eyes, that they might ſee their wretched condition as Sinners, to haſten their *flight from the Wrath to come*, to make them humbly, thankfully and entirely *receive Chriſt*, as their *Prince*, and *all-ſufficient Saviour.* And to build up the Converted *in their moſt holy Faith*, and more excellent Love, that is *the fulfilling of the Law.* In ſhort, to make true Chriſtians eminent in Knowledge and Univerſal Obedience.

As the Matter of his Sermons was deſigned for the good of Souls; ſo his way of expreſſion was proper to that end. Words are the Vehicle of the Heavenly Light. As the Divine Wiſdom was incarnate to reveal the Eternal Counſels of God to the World; ſo Spiritual Wiſdom in the Mind, muſt be clothed with words, to make it

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ſenſible to others. And in this he had a ſingular Talent. His Stile was not exquiſitely ſtudied, not conſiſting of harmonious Periods, but far diſtant from vulgar Meanneſs. His Expreſſion was natural and free, clear and eloquent, quick and powerful, without any ſpice of folly, and always ſuitable to the Simplicity and Majeſty of Divine Truths. His Sermons afforded ſubſtantial Food with Delight, ſo that a faſtidious Mind could not diſreliſh them. He abhorr'd a vain oſtentation of Wit, in handling Sacred things; ſo venerable and grave, and of eternal Conſequence. Indeed, what is more unbecoming a Miniſter of Chriſt, than to waſte the Spirits of his Brain, as a Spider does his Bowels, to ſpin a Web only to catch Flies? to get vain applauſe by fooliſh pleaſing the ignorant. And what cruelty is it to the Souls of Men? 'Tis recorded as an inſtance of *Nero*'s ſavage Temper, that in a general Famine, when many periſh'd by Hunger, he ordered a Ship ſhould come from *Egypt* (the Granary of *Italy*) laden with Sand for the uſe of Wreſtlers. In ſuch extremity to provide only for Delight, that there might be Spectacles on the Theatre, when the City of *Rome* was a ſpectacle of ſuch Miſery, as to melt the Heart of any but a *Nero*, was moſt barbarous Cruelty. But 'tis cruelty of an heavier imputation, for a Miniſter to prepare his Sermons to pleaſe the fooliſh curioſity of Fancy with flaſhy Conceits; nay, ſuch light Vanities, that would ſcarce be endured in a Scene, whiles hungry Souls languiſh for want of ſolid Nouriſhment.

Suet.

His fervour and earneſtneſs in Preaching was ſuch, as might ſoften and make pliant the moſt ſtubborn, obdurate Spirits. I am not ſpeaking of one whoſe Talent was only in Voice, that labours in the Pulpit as if the end of Preaching were for the exerciſe of the Body, and not for the profit of Souls: But this *Man of God* was inflam'd with an Holy Zeal, and from thence ſuch ardent Expreſſions broke forth, as were capable to procure attention and conſent in his Hearers. He ſpake as one that had a living Faith within him of Divine Truths. From this union of Zeal with his Knowledge, he was excellently qualified to convince and convert Souls. The ſound of words only ſtrikes the Ear, but the Mind reaſons with the Mind, and the Heart ſpeaks to the Heart.

Si ſudare aliter non potes, eſt aliud.

His unparallel'd Aſſiduity in Preaching, declar'd him very ſenſible of thoſe dear and ſtrong Obligations that lie upon Miniſters, to be very diligent in that Bleſſed Work. What a powerful Motive our Saviour urged upon St. *Peter? As thou loveſt me, feed my Sheep, feed my Lambs.* And can any feed too much, when none can love enough? Can any Pains be ſufficient for the Salvation of Souls, for which the Son of God did not eſteem his Blood too coſtly a price? Is not inceſſant unwearied Induſtry requiſite to advance the Work of Grace in them to perfection? In this the Work of a Miniſter has its peculiar diſadvantage, That whereas an Artificer, how curious and difficult ſoever his Work be, yet has this encouragement, That what is begun with Art and Care, he finds in the ſame State wherein 'twas left. A Painter that deſigns an exact Piece, draws many Lines, often touches it with his Pencil to give it Life and Beauty, and though unfiniſh'd, 'tis not ſpoil'd by his intermiſſion. A Sculptor that carves a Statue, though his labour be hard from the reſiſtance of the Matter, yet his Work remains firm and durable. But the Heart of Man is of a ſtrange temper, hard as Marble, not eaſily receptive of Heavenly Impreſſions; yet fluid as Water, thoſe Impreſſions are eaſily defac'd in it; 'tis expos'd to ſo many temptations that induce an oblivion of eternal Things, that without frequent excitations to quicken and confirm its holy Purpoſes, it grows careleſs, and all the labour is loſt that was ſpent on it. This faithful Miniſter *abounded in the Work of the Lord*; and which is truly admirable, though ſo frequent in Preaching, yet was always ſuperior to others, and equal to himſelf. In his laſt time when declining to Death, yet he would not leave his beloved Work; the vigour of his Mind ſupporting the weakneſs of his Body. I remember when oppreſt with an obſtinate Hoarſneſs, a Friend deſiring him to ſpare himſelf; he rejected the advice with indignation.

John 21.

He was no fomenter of Faction, but ſtudious of the Publick Tranquility. He knew what a Bleſſing Peace is, and wiſely foreſaw the pernicious Conſequences that attend Diviſions. By Peace, the bond of mutual Harmony, the weakeſt things are preſerv'd and proſper; but where Diſcord reigns, the ſtrongeſt are near to ruin. The heavenly Conſent in the Primitive Church, was a principal cauſe of its miraculous increaſe and flouriſhing; but after Diſſentions prevail'd amongſt Chriſtians, that was deſtroy'd in a ſhort time, which was built by the Divine Union and Heroick Patience of the Primitive Chriſtians. And the glorious Beginnings that promis'd the Reformation of all *Europe*, were more obſtructed by the Diſſentions of ſome employed in that Bleſſed Work, than by all the Power and Subtilty, the Arms and Artifices

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of *Rome* it ſelf. How afflictive is the conſideration of our divided Church? Sweet Peace! whither art thou fled? Bleſſed Saviour! who didſt by thy precious Blood reconcile Heaven and Earth, ſend down thy Spirit to inſpire us with that Wiſdom that is pure and peaceable, that thoſe who agree in the ſame Principles of Faith, in the ſame ſubſtantial parts of Worſhip, in aſſerting the ſame indiſpenſible neceſſity of Holineſs, may receive one another in Love. I am affectionately engaged in a Matter that ſo nearly touches all thoſe that value the *Proteſtant* Intereſt.

Briefly; Conſider him as a *Chriſtian*, his Life was anſwerable to his Doctrine.

'Tis applicable to ſome Miniſters, what is obſerved of the Carbuncle; by its colour, luſtre, and fiery ſparklings it ſeems to be actually a Fire, but it has only the name and appearance of it. Thus ſome in the Pulpit ſeem to be all on fire with Zeal, yet their Hearts are as cold as a Stone, without Holy Affections, and their Lives are unworthy their Divine Miniſtration. But this Servant of God was like a fruitful Tree, that produces in its Branches what it contains in the Root; his inward Grace was made viſible in a Converſation becoming the Goſpel of Chriſt.

His reſolute Contempt of the World ſecur'd him from being wrought on by thoſe Motives, that tempt low Spirits from their Duty. He would not raſhly throw himſelf into Troubles, nor *ſpretâ Conſcientiâ* avoid them. His generous Conſtancy of Mind in reſiſting the current of Popular Humour, declar'd his Loyalty to his Divine Maſter. His Charity was eminent in procuring Supplies for others, when in mean Circumſtances himſelf. But he had great experience of God's fatherly Proviſion, to which his filial Confidence was correſpondent.

His Converſation in his Familily was holy and exemplary, every day inſtructing them from the Scriptures in their Duty.

I ſhall finiſh my Character of him, with obſerving his Humility. He was deeply affected with the ſenſe of his Frailties and Unworthineſs. He conſidered the infinite Purity of God, the Perfection of his Law the Rule of our Duty, and by that humbling Light diſcover'd his manifold defects. He expreſt his thoughts to me a little before his Death; *If the Holy Prophets were under ſtrong impreſſions of fear, upon the extraordinary diſcovery of the Divine Preſence, how ſhall we poor Creatures appear before that Holy and Dread Majeſty? Iſaiah*, after his glorious viſion of God, reflecting upon himſelf, as not retir'd from the commerce and corruption of the World, breaks forth, *Wo is me, for I am undone! becauſe I am a Man of unclean Lips, and I dwell in the midſt of a People of unclean Lips; for mine Eyes have ſeen the King, the Lord of Hoſts.* 'Tis infinitely terrible to appear *before God the Judge of all*, without the protection of *the Blood of Sprinkling, that ſpeaks better things than the Blood of Abel.* This alone reliev'd him, and ſupported his Hopes. Though his Labours were abundant, yet he knew that the Work of God, paſſing through our Hands, is ſo blemiſh'd, that without an appeal to pardoning Mercy and Grace, we cannot ſtand in Judgment. This was the Subject of his laſt publick Sermon.

He languiſh'd many Months, but preſuming he ſhould be too ſtrong for his Infirmity, neglected it, till at laſt it became inſuperable and mortal. Many pathetical Aggravations heighten our great and dear Loſs; That ſuch a faithful Miniſter of Chriſt ſhould be taken away, whoſe Preaching was ſo powerful to repair the woful Ruins of Godlineſs and Virtue in a degenerate Age: Whoſe prudent pacifick Spirit rendred him ſo uſeful in theſe *Divided Times*, when Profeſſors of the ſame Religion are alienated from one another, as if they had been baptized with the Waters of Striſe: That before our Tears were dried up for the loſs of other worthy Miniſters, the Fountain of Sorrow ſhould be opened again by this afflicting ſtroke. But it becomes us to receive the Diſpenſations of Heaven with humble and quiet ſubmiſſion; to reflect upon our Sins with an holy Grief, that provoke God to remove ſuch an excellent Inſtrument of his Glory from us. *Let us pray to the Lord of the Harveſt, that he will ſend forth Faithful Labourers into it.* O that ſurviving Miniſters might be animated with a Zeal more pure and fervent in their Divine Work! And that People would be wiſe, while a price is put into their Hands, to improve it for their eternal Advantage. The neglected Goſpel will at laſt be a terrible Witneſs againſt the Diſobedient, to juſtify and aggravate their Condemnation.